

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 01940

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, BQG, GE, GW
SUBJECT: GDR DIPLOMATIC BRIEFING ON WISCHNEWSKI'S
EAST BERLIN VISIT

REF: BERLIN 00695

A GDR DIPLOMAT IN THE GDR REPRESENTATION HERE HAS
TOLD US THE FOLLOWING REGARDING THE EAST GERMAN ATTITUDE
ON THE SPIEGEL "MANIFESTO" AND THE WISCHNEWSKI VISIT/

-- THE GDR HAD OBJECTED TO THE SPIEGEL "MANIFESTO" FOR
THREE REASONS WHICH, IN COMBINATION, WENT BEYOND THE
LINE THAT THE GDR COULD ACCEPT. THOSE REASONS WERE:

(A) THE INSULT TO HONECKER WAS SO DIRECT THAT
IT COULD NOT BE IGNORED. MOREOVER, GIVEN THE DISPUTES
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THAT EXIST WITHIN THE GDR LEADERSHIP ABOUT POLICY TO-
WARD THE FRG, HONECKER'S FAILURE TO RETALIATE WOULD
HAVE MADE HIM VULNERABLE TO CHARGES THAT HE WAS BEING
TOO GENEROUS WITH THE FRG. EVEN THOUGH GDR MEDIA COULD
HARDLY BE DESCRIBED AS FLATTERING TO WEST GERMAN DE-
VELOPMENTS, THEY DID NOT ATTACK FRG PRINCIPALS IN THE
MANNER THE SPIEGEL HAD DONE AGAINST HONECKER.

(B) THE MANIFESTO CREATED THE IMPRESSION OF A WEAK AND POTENTIALLY UNSTABLE GDR THAT WOULD NEED TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN ORDER TO GAIN FAVORS FROM THE FRG. THE GDR COULD NOT PERMIT SUCH AN IMPRESSION TO PREVAIL.

(C) THE PUBLIC REACTION IN THE FRG TO THE SPIEGEL MANIFESTO MIGHT JEOPARDIZE FRG-GDR RELATIONS. IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT ANY SUCH REACTION BE CONTAINED.

-- WISCHNEWSKI'S VISIT HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL (REFTEL). WISCHNEWSKI COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES IN HIS DISCUSSION WITH GDR OFFICIALS. NONE WAS RESOLVED, AS HAD BEEN EXPECTED, BUT THE CONTINUED WILLINGNESS OF BOTH SIDES TO MAKE PROGRESS HAD BEEN CLEARLY MANIFESTED.

-- WISCHNEWSKI TOLD HIS INTERLOCUTORS THAT SCHMIDT STILL WISHED TO MEET WITH HONECKER DURING 1978 THOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO FIX THE TIME OR THE ARRANGEMENTS NOW.

-- NOW THAT THE WISCHNEWSKI CONTACT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, AND BOTH SIDES HAD USED THE OCCASION TO REITERATE THEIR DETERMINATION TO PROCEED WITH THEIR NEGOTIATIONS, IT WOULD NO LONGER BE NECESSARY FOR WISCHNEWSKI OR HIS INTERLOCUTORS TO CONTINUE THEIR CONFIDENTIAL

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DIRECT DIALOGUE. INSTEAD, FRG-GDR CONTACTS WOULD NOW RETURN TO THE NORMAL LEVELS (I.E., GAUS IN EAST BERLIN AND KOHL IN BONN) ALTHOUGH SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WOULD NOT BEGIN RIGHT AWAY. OF COURSE, THERE WILL HAVE TO BE SPECIAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A SCHMIDT-HONECKER MEETING.
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